

## **OUTSIDE YOUR HOME, MAINTAIN A ‘DEFENSIBLE SPACE’ IN CASE OF FIRE**

Each year, thousands of acres of California wildland and hundreds of homes are destroyed by fire, during a fire season that lasts from May through October. Living along bluff areas or in the hills, although very beautiful, present serious fire safety risks to you and your property. These risks are caused by the combustible construction of your property combined with steep terrain and dense dry vegetation. **Fire protection is everyone’s responsibility.** The Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District would like to offer you a checklist that will assist you in making your home and surrounding area more fire safe.

### Roof

- ☐ Remove dead branches overhanging your roof
- ☐ Remove all branches within 10 feet of your chimney
- ☐ Clean all dead leaves and needles from your roof and gutters
- ☐ Install a roof that meets the fire resistance classification of ‘Class C’ or better
- ☐ Cover your chimney outlet and stovepipe with a nonflammable screen of ½ inch or smaller mesh

### Landscape

- ☐ Create a ‘Defensible Space’ by removing all flammable vegetation at least 30 feet from all structures and replacing it with fire resistive plants
- ☐ Space native trees and shrubs at least 10 feet apart
- ☐ For trees taller than 18 feet, prune lower branches within six feet of the ground
- ☐ Choose ornamental landscaping plants that are fire resistive
- ☐ Maintain all plants by regularly removing dead branches, leaves and needles

### Yard

- ☐ Stack woodpiles at least 30 feet from all structures and clear away flammable vegetation within 10 feet of woodpiles
- ☐ Locate LPG tanks at least 30 feet from any structure and surround them with 10 feet of clearance
- ☐ Remove all stacks of construction materials, pine needles, leaves and other debris from your yard
- ☐ Contact your local fire department to see if open burning is allowed in your area; if so, obtain a burning permit

### Emergency Water Supply

- ☐ Maintain an emergency water supply, that meets fire department standards, through one of the following:
- ☐ A community water/hydrant system
- ☐ A cooperative emergency storage tank with neighbors
- ☐ A minimum storage supply of 2,500 gallons on your property
- ☐ Clearly mark all emergency water sources
- ☐ Create easy firefighter access to your closest emergency water source
- ☐ If your water comes from a well, consider an emergency generator to operate the pump during a power failure

### Access

- ☐ Identify at least two exit routes from your neighborhood
- ☐ Design driveways and road width, grade and curves to allow access for large emergency vehicles
- ☐ Post clear road signs to show traffic restrictions such as dead-end roads, weight and height limitations
- ☐ Make sure dead-end roads and long driveways have turnaround areas wide enough for emergency vehicles
- ☐ Clear flammable vegetation at least 10 feet from roads and five feet from driveways
- ☐ Cut back overhanging tree branches above roads
- ☐ Construct fire barriers, such as greenbelts, parks, golf courses and athletic fields
- ☐ Make sure that your street is named or numbered, and a sign is visibly posted at each street intersection
- ☐ Post your house address at the beginning of your driveway, or on your house if it is easily visible from the road

### For Safety’s Sake

- ☐ Designate an emergency meeting place outside your home
- ☐ Practice emergency exit drills regularly
- ☐ Make sure all children know how to dial 9-1-1 and know their address and phone number
- ☐ Install smoke detectors in every bedroom, check them monthly, and change the battery at least once a year.

For more information feel free to contact the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District,  
Community Services Division at (916) 566-4000.